Filling up of vacancies in High Courts

734. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating various measures for the clearance of huge arrears of cases in various High Courts;

(b) if so, the details of the steps being considered;

(c) the number of vacancies existing in the different High Courts and the reasons for delay in filling up the vacancies; and

(d) by when Government propose to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) In a continuing endeavour for providing prompt justice, the Government intends to further simplify the judicial procedures, increase the number of posts of judges, strengthen the existing infrastructural facilities by providing funds for the construction of court buildings and residential accommodations for Judges and adopt Lok Adalats and other alternatives/appropriate modes of dispute resolution.

(c) and (d) A List indicating the vacancies is enclosed. [*See Appendix* 188 *Annexure No.* 23] The procedure for appointment of High Court Judges involves consultations among several constitutional authorities. Every effort is being made to fill existing vacancies at the earliest. It is not possible to indicate the time by which these posts will be filled up.

Status of Lok Adalats and Legal Aid Programmes

735. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of Lok Adalats and Legal Aid Programmes in the country, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases disposed of through Lok Adalats during the last three years, State-wise; and

(c) the amount of compensation paid through Lok Adalats, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Lok Adalats and Legal Aid Programmes envisaged in the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 have a statutory base with the enforcement of the said Act in the country with effect from 9.11.95.

(b) and (c) The information as provided by the 19 State Legal Services Authorities, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Delhi is given in the Annexure. [*See Appendix* 188, *Annexure No.* 24]

The information from the remaining 13 State Legal Authorities, namely, Assam, Goa, J&K, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Tripura, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Maharashtra and Sikkim is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Conversion of Sharkhej-Maliya State Highway as National Highway

736. SHRI ANANTRAY DEV SHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sharkhej-Viramgam-Malvan-Dhrangadhra-Halvad-Maliya-State Highway No. 7 and 17 joining NH No. 8A near Ahmedabad and NH No. 8A near Maliya (186.75 kms) is under active consideration of the Central Government to declare it as National Highway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely time by when the decision will be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.